

Wheeler County, Oregon



Wheeler County Birding Locations

[Open a Map That Shows All Wheeler County Locations](#)

IMPORTANT!! THIS TABLE IS MEANT TO BE READ LEFT TO RIGHT (ROWS), NOT UP AND DOWN (COLUMNS)!!

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Butte Creek Summit	Shelton State Wayside	Julia Henderson Pioneer Park
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Muleshoe Recreation Area	Spray	Kahler Basin Road
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Twickenham-Bridge Crk	John Day FBNM Painted Hills	Meyers Canyon
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Crystal Springs Aspen Groves	Bridge Creek Wilderness	Mt. Pisgah Lookout
Barnhouse Springs CG	Forest Road 12	Antone Road
Mountain Creek Valley	Spanish Peak	Black Canyon Wilderness

If you have only a short time in our county, try these locations first!			
SPRING	Cottonwood Cr./Pine Cr.	Crystal Springs Aspen Groves	Shelton State Wayside
SUMMER	Barnhouse Springs CG	Meyers Canyon	Fossil Sewage Ponds
FALL	Bridge Creek Wilderness	Fopiano Reservoir	Julia Henderson Pioneer Park
WINTER	Fossil	Mitchell	Antone Road

Author(s): Joel Geier, Paul Sullivan, Linda Fink, Chuck Gates

County Seat: Fossil

County Size: 1,715 Square Miles

High Elevation: Spanish Peak (6,871 feet)

Rarities: Boreal Owl, Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Eastern Phoebe, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, Northern Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, Tennessee Warbler, Black-and-White Warbler, Black-throated Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Common Grackle, Common Redpoll

Top County Lister: Donna Lusthoff (216)

Year List Record: Craig Corder & Judy Stevens 1996 (196)

County Contact Person: Email [Paul Sullivan](#)

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Introduction: Wheeler is Oregon's least populated county, with fewer than 1500 residents. The only towns with food, gas, and lodging are Fossil, Mitchell, and Spray.

This is a rugged landscape of mountains, canyons, and badlands with scattered agricultural land along some of the valleys. Bird habitats range from dense lodge pole pine at high elevations and ponderosa pine forest at mid-elevations, through juniper woodlands and big sagebrush to sagebrush steppe, basalt rimrock, and nearly barren badlands in the Painted Hills area.

The county has no large lakes, so water birds are found mainly along the John Day River, small reservoirs including Painted Cove, Fopiano and Fort Creek reservoirs, or the Fossil sewage ponds.

Hoover Creek Road/Hoover Creek Reservoir

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DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 84 D-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 72 F-5
geographic coordinates 45°01'33.4"N 120°13'01.1"W
[\(45.025948, -120.216985\)](#)

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Hoover Creek Road and Reservoir](#)

Location: Take Hwy 19 north out of Fossil for about 1 mile and look for Hoover Creek as it crosses under the road. About a mile and a half farther, you will see Hoover Cr. Road. Take this road about 1.8 miles and you will see a large pond on your right after a farm house. This is Hoover Reservoir ([45.029097, -120.185863](#)). This body of water is on private land so please bird from the road.

Habitat and Birds: The riparian area along the creek is good for migrants or the occasional Spotted Towhee. Listen for Pinyon Jays along Hoover Creek Road. Hoover Creek Reservoir can have just about any kind of waterfowl on it.

Fossil [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-5
geographic coordinates 44°59'57.3"N 120°12'53.7"W
([44.999244, -120.214905](#))

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[City Information](#)

Location: Coming from the west, Fossil is 48 miles from Hwy 97. From Hwy 97 near Willowdale, take Hwy 293 to Antelope and then Hwy 218 to Fossil. Coming from the Columbia River, and I-84, take exit 137 at Arlington. Travel on Hwy 19 south for 58 miles to Fossil (most of this route is in Gilliam County so check the Gilliam page for all the good spots to bird along the way).

Habitat and Birds: Look for both Eurasian Collared-Dove and Western Scrub-Jay in this little town. Harris's Sparrow, Evening Grosbeak, and Blue Jay have also been seen in town. Things as different as Mountain Quail and Solitary Sandpiper have been found here.

Fossil Sewage Ponds [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-5
geographic coordinates 45°00'18.4"N 120°13'50.9"W
([45.005118, -120.230801](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Fossil Sewage Ponds](#)

Location: In Fossil, take Hwy 19 NW until you leave town. Just a short distance from town are two ponds that are raised above the road on the left

side of the road. One pond is several hundred yards past the other. The upper pond is much easier to view than the pond nearest to town.

Habitat and Birds: Birds here include a variety of ducks and grebes. Look for phalaropes, peeps, and the occasional tern.

Butte Creek Road [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-5

geographic coordinates 45°00'09.5"N 120°13'43.2"W

([45.002637](#), [-120.228662](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Fossil Sewage Ponds](#)

Location: In Fossil, take Hwy 19 NW until you leave town. Just a short distance from town are two ponds that are raised above the road on the left side of the road. Between the two ponds is Butte Creek Road.

Habitat and Birds: Take this road as long as you like as it winds through farmland, sage flats and canyons. It follows Butte Creek so there are many riparian opportunities here. Birds here include geese, mallards, Common Merganser, Great Horned Owls, raptors, Chukar, Canyon and Rock Wrens, Cliff Swallows, corvids, and hard-to-find-in-the-county Black-capped Chickadee. A Brown Thrasher was found once. A Western Screech-owl was predictable years ago.

Cottonwood Creek Road [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-5

geographic coordinates 44°56'53.6"N 120°12'48.8"W

([44.948235](#), [-120.213557](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Go about 3 miles south of Fossil on Hwy 218 and look for Cottonwood Creek Rd. on your left. The road cuts into a canyon with tall trees. This road eventually hooks up with Pine Creek Road and can make a very birdy loop.

Habitat and Birds: This road has a mix of junipers and pines. Look for dry pine species like Dusky Flycatcher, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Gray Flycatcher, Pygmy Nuthatch, Calliope Hummingbird, Flammulated Owl, N. Pygmy-owl and Common Poorwill. In the riparian areas look for Virginia Rail and nesting Lincoln's Sparrows.

In winter, Townsend's Solitaire are abundant and Mt. Bluebirds can be found along this road.

Pine Creek [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-4
geographic coordinates 44°54'23.3"N 120°16'34.3"W
([44.906478, -120.276186](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Located on Hwy 218 about 5 miles southwest of Cottonwood Creek Road. This road loops up into timber and connects with Cottonwood Creek Road for a nice loop.

Habitat and Birds: Forest species are mixed with canyon and juniper species here. Look for Lewis's Woodpecker in the fall. Golden-crowned Kinglet and even Merlin have been seen on this road. You may also find Mountain Quail (this is a go-to place for this species in the county) and Green-tailed Towhee.

Robinson Canyon [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-4
geographic coordinates 44°54'08.5"N 120°17'36.0"W
([44.902355, -120.293325](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Robinson Canyon is on Hwy 218 and only a mile west of Pine Creek Road. It's about 10 miles from Fossil. There is a gate on this road so please close the gate behind you.

Habitat and Birds: This road is rough and probably requires a high clearance vehicle. It winds its way through juniper and rocky canyons. Listen for Rock and Canyon Wren. Mountain Quail are here along with Red-naped Sapsucker and Cedar Waxwing. Listen for Green-tailed Towhee and Ash-throated Flycatcher.

Hancock Field Station [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-4
geographic coordinates 44°55'10.2"N 120°25'31.5"W
([44.919499, -120.425407](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[Hancock Field Station Facebook Page](#)

Location: Located about 2.5 miles east of Clarno and about 18 miles from Fossil off of Hwy 218. Look for the large Mailbox with a roof on it.

Habitat and Birds: The station is nestled in sage covered hills with a few junipers around. Brewer's Sparrow and Lark Sparrow nest in summer along with a few Gray Flycatchers. Chukars can be heard calling from the hillsides and Golden Eagles sometimes soar overhead. Look for Loggerhead Shrike in summer and Northern Shrike in winter.

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Clarno Unit [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-4
geographic coordinates 44°54'41.4"N 120°24'55.4"W
([44.911498, -120.415392](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for the Clarno Unit](#)

Location The Clarno Unit is located 18 miles southwest of the town of Fossil along Highway 218. There is no visitor center here, just a rest stop and a chance to get out and bird.

Habitat and Birds: [National Park Service Website](#). This is a small loop with a restroom and a short trail that runs into sage covered hills. Brewer's and Vesper Sparrows are here in summer. Listen for Canyon Wren and Chukar as well.

Clarno Area [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-4
geographic coordinates 44°54'58.0"N 120°28'08.7"W
([44.916108, -120.469074](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Clarno is where Hwy 218 meets the John Day River. The river is the draw here. Migrants use the river as a highway and it can be choked with transients during the spring and fall. Swallows, nighthawks, and swifts use the river to feast. There is a pulloff area and a parking area. Take care to watch for private property but the river should allow some exploring.

Habitat and Birds: Birds here include Mt. Quail, White-throated Swift, Cooper's Hawk, Western Scrub-Jay, Bewick's Wren, and Cassin's Finch. Check the small marshy area near the road between Clarno and the JDFBNM

described above. Virginia Rail are often found there. This species is not easy to find in Wheeler County.

Bear Hollow County Park [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-5
geographic coordinates 44°56'19.3"N 120°07'29.0"W
([44.938683, -120.124710](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Bear Hollow County Park](#)

Location: Located about 7 miles south of Fossil on Hwy 19.

Habitat and Birds: Thick pine trees and riparian areas produce plenty of birds. Species seen here include chat, Say's Phoebe, pewee, Song Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Western Kingbird, and Western Screech-Owl.

Wolf Hollow [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-5
geographic coordinates 44°56'00.2"N 120°07'01.4"W
([44.933394, -120.117062](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Located about 7 miles south of Fossil on Hwy 19 just past Bear Hollow Road and Bear Hollow Park.

Habitat and Birds: Like most of the canyons in the area, this one is lined with juniper and winds its way through patches of sage and grassland. Mt. Bluebirds, Golden Eagle, and Mt. Quail are possible here.

Butte Creek Summit [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-5
geographic coordinates 44°54'22.4"N 120°06'36.7"W
([44.906229, -120.110198](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: About 2 miles south of Bear Hollow and 1.5 miles north of Shelton Wayside is Butte Creek. It runs under the road. Pull off and bird this area.

Habitat and Birds: Riparian vegetation surrounded by sage and juniper hillsides. Chukar, Golden Eagle, Black-capped Chickadee, Brewer's Sparrow, Chat, and Lazuli Bunting can be found here.

Shelton State Wayside [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-5

geographic coordinates

North End - 44°53'43.5"N 120°05'26.8"W ([44.895415, -120.090784](#))

South End - 44°50'02.0"N 120°02'02.1"W ([44.833894, -120.033930](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Shelton Wayside](#)

Location: Found 10 miles SE of Fossil on Hwy 19, Shelton (south end) has campsites and a well developed trail system.

Habitat and Birds: Large Pines and riparian areas attract birds to this location. Birds here include Mt. Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, MacGillivray's Warbler, Red Crossbill, Rufous Hummingbird, and Western Tanager.

Julia Henderson Pioneer Park [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 A-5

geographic coordinates 44°53'38.5"N 120°04'18.5"W

([44.894014, -120.071810](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Julia Henderson](#)

Location: Located just one mile southeast of Shelton, this park is over 100 years old. There is no camping but wandering around and birding is encouraged.

Habitat and Birds: If you missed any species at Shelton, stop and get them here.

Winlock Road [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 A-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 A-6

geographic coordinates 44°52'42.4"N 120°02'48.6"W

([44.878438, -120.046824](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Located 1.7 miles SE of Shelton Wayside off of Hwy 19.

Habitat and Birds: This road winds through farmland and dry open areas to merge with the juniper forest. There are a couple of reservoirs here that

can be viewed from the road. Stay on the road as both sides are private property.

Umatilla National Forest [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 A-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 A-7
geographic coordinates 44°54'27.7"N 119°42'28.1"W
([44.907702, -119.707811](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: The Umatilla National Forest can be accessed via Hwy 19 south out of Fossil and turning onto Hwy 207 to Spray and continuing on to Heppner on 207.

Habitat and Birds: This pine forest will produce the standard pine species. Ruffed Grouse can be heard in spring and at least 6 species of woodpecker should be present (including Pileated). All three nuthatches and creeper should be present along with Mt. Chickadee. Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Fox Sparrow nest here.

Service Creek [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 B-6
geographic coordinates 44°47'50.9"N 120°00'11.7"W
([44.797458, -120.003246](#))

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Location: Service Creek is located at the Jct of Hwys 19 and 207 about 20 miles south of Fossil and 23 miles north of Mitchell and Hwy 26. The John Day River joins Hwy 207 here.

Habitat and Birds: Thick riparian area exists in this area, sand bars and open water can produce some birds. Spotted Sandpipers and Killdeer can be by the river. Common Mergansers swim while Belted Kingfishers dive in the fast moving water. Flycatchers and warblers are found in migration and a Red-eyed Vireo showed up here once. Both Black-chinned and Calliope Hummers have been reported from this location along with chat.

Muleshoe Recreation Area [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 B-6
geographic coordinates 44°48'11.6"N 119°58'55.5"W
([44.80321, -119.98207](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Muleshoe RA](#)

Location: From Prineville, Oregon, follow Highway 26 east for approximately 46 miles to the town of Mitchell. At Mitchell, turn north onto Highway 207 and follow for approximately 25 miles to the intersection of Highways 207 and 19. At the intersection, turn west (right) and follow for approximately 2 miles. Mule Shoe is located on the south side of the highway between mileposts 80 and 81. This location is 2.0 miles east of the town of Service Creek on Hwy 19.

Habitat and Birds: This is another opportunity to access the John Day River. Yellow-breasted Chat, Bullock's Oriole, Bank Swallow and other riparian birds are possible.

Spray [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 A-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 A-7
geographic coordinates 44°50'01.1"N 119°47'37.7"W
([44.833629, -119.793795](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Spray is a small farming community 12.7 miles east of Service Creek on Hwy 207/19 along the John Day River.

Habitat and Birds: In the town and in the surrounding farmland, lots of good birds can show up. Greater White-fronted Geese have been recorded here along with Common Merganser, Barrow's Goldeneye and Bald Eagle. Others include Say's Phoebe, Townsend's Solitaire, Cedar Waxwing, Western Tanager, and American Goldfinch. Flooded farm fields can bring shorebirds and waders like the Least Sandpiper and Black-necked Stilt.

Kahler Basin Road [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 A-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 A-7
geographic coordinates 44°50'14.6"N 119°47'29.7"W
([44.837386, -119.791571](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: In the town of Spray, turn east on Pine Avenue and follow it out of town. This will become Kahler Basin Road and will travel almost due north.

Habitat and Birds: This road climbs into dry hills with juniper and sage punctuated by an occasional farm. Species seen here include Wild Turkey, Gray Flycatcher, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Brewer's Sparrow, Cassin's Finch, and Dark-eyed Junco.

Kimberly Area [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 A-6 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 B-8
geographic coordinates 44°45'32.7"N 119°38'38.6"W
([44.759089, -119.644065](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Kimberly is located 8 miles SE of Spray on Hwy 19. There is no community here, just some farmland and the river.

Habitat and Birds: Look for Mergansers in the river and Golden Eagles overhead.

Twickenham Area [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 B-5
geographic coordinates 44°44'12.3"N 120°09'57.3"W
([44.736742, -120.165905](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From Mitchell, take 207 north for 9.2 miles and turn left (NW) on Girds Creek Road. Take this road for 8 miles to the Twickenham Area. If coming from Fossil, take Rowe Creek Rd. just north of Shelton State Wayside and it will take you to Twickenham.

Habitat and Birds: Birds seen in this area include Cinnamon Teal, Ring-necked Pheasant, Great-blue Heron, American Kestrel, Common Poorwill, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Willow Flycatcher, Bewick's Wren, Northern Mockingbird, Yellow Warbler, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Brown-headed Cowbird. Keep an eye out for Tricolored Blackbirds in this area.

Girds Creek Road [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 B-5
geographic coordinates 44°40'09.5"N 120°07'20.0"W
([44.669300, -120.122213](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location, Habitat, and Birds: This is a typical canyon road for the area but should be taken because, not only does it take you to Twickenham, it can be pretty productive in and of itself. Birds seen here include Chukar, Loggerhead Shrike, Brewer's Sparrow, Bushtit, and Chipping Sparrow.

Rowe Creek Road [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 B-5
geographic coordinates 44°53'48.3"N 120°05'55.7"W
([44.896754, -120.098815](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Rowe Creek Road travels north and east from the Twickenham area. It eventually meets up with Hwy 19 near Shelton State Wayside. The distance from Twickenham to Shelton is about 14 miles.

Habitat and Birds: Starting in farmland, this road goes past Rowe Creek Reservoir and into dry hills. The last 3-4 miles are in timber. Birds here include Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Spotted Towhee, House Wren, and Cliff Swallow.

Rowe Creek Reservoir [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 A-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 B-5
geographic coordinates 44°48'17.7"N 120°10'27.1"W
([44.804916, -120.174180](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Located on Lowe Creek Road 5 miles north of Twickenham and 9 miles south of Shelton Wayside.

Habitat and Birds: Osprey and waterfowl are the highlights here. Just about anything could show up at this desert oasis.

Twickenham-Bridge Creek Cutoff Road

[Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 B-4
geographic coordinates 44°41'56.2"N 120°17'08.2"W
([44.698958, -120.285608](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: About 2 miles north of the Painted Hills Unit of the JDNFB off of Burnt Ranch/Bridge Creek Road.

Habitat and Birds: This primitive road takes you through rugged arid habitats and ends in Twickenham. Look for Lark Sparrow, Brewer's Sparrow, Bushtit, and meadowlark.

Painted Hills Unit John Day Fossil Beds National Monument [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 C-5
geographic coordinates 44°39'37.3"N 120°15'10.4"W
([44.660358, -120.252880](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Painted Hills Unit](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Painted Hills Unit Picnic Area](#)

Location The [Painted Hills Unit](#) of the JDFBNM is located 9 miles northwest of the town of Mitchell, just off Highway 26. Take Burnt Ranch Rd. (called Bridge Creek Rd. on some maps) to access the unit.

Habitat and Birds: [National Park Service website](#) Birds here include Ring-necked Pheasant, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Western Wood Pewee, Loggerhead Shrike, Black-throated Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow and Pine Siskin.

Painted Cove [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 B-4
geographic coordinates 44°39'47.9"N 120°16'53.0"W
([44.663303, -120.281378](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Painted Cove is a large reservoir that is in the NW corner of the monument. After just over 5 miles from Hwy 26, turn into the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. The road will fork. The left fork takes you to a nice picnic area that is worth birding. The right fork takes you to Painted Cove.

Habitat and Birds: This is the largest body of water in the county and is a magnet to waterfowl. Look for many species of ducks, grebes, herons, shorebirds, terns and plenty of other things. Some unusual species here have included Baird's Sandpiper, Pied-billed Grebe, and Red-necked Phalarope.

Meyers Canyon [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 C-5
geographic coordinates 44°36'59.3"N 120°12'28.8"W
([44.616463, -120.208007](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From Hwy 26, take Burnt Ranch/Bridge Creek Rd. for about a mile north and you will see Meyer's Canyon on your right.

Habitat and Birds: This canyon has steep sides and a riparian bottom. Chukar, Golden Eagle, Gray Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Say's Phoebe, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Loggerhead Shrike, Rock & Canyon Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Black-throated Gray Warbler, and Cassin's Finch have all been seen here.

Burnt Ranch/Bridge Creek Road [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 C-5

geographic coordinates 44°35'52.8"N 120°12'55.0"W

[\(44.598012, -120.215268\)](#)

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: This road is 4 miles NW of Mitchell off of Hwy 26. This is the main access road to the Painted Hills Unit John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

Habitat and Birds: This road follows a main drainage with plenty of riparian areas and steep cliffs. Some of the species seen along this road include Ross's Goose, Lewis's Woodpecker, Loggerhead Shrike, N. Rough-winged Swallow, Bank Swallow, Bushtit, Lark Sparrow, and Bullock's Oriole.

Gable Creek [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 C-5

geographic coordinates 44°35'26.0"N 120°12'04.7"W

[\(44.590567, -120.201292\)](#)

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Located 3 miles west of Mitchell, this road travels south from Hwy 26.

Habitat and Birds: Juniper yields to farmland and finally timber. Listen for Mountain Quail on this road.

Mitchell [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 C-5

geographic coordinates 44°34'00.1"N 120°09'19.4"W

[\(44.566700, -120.155401\)](#)

[View A Google Map](#)

Location, Habitat, and Birds: Mitchell is a tiny community on Hwy 26 about 47 miles east of Prineville and about 70 miles west of John Day. While the center of town offers little, both ends of the town can be birdy, especially the park on the east end of town. Birds here include Wild Turkey, Western Scrub-Jay, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Black-chinned Hummingbird, both kinglets, Cedar Waxwing, Lazuli Bunting and Evening Grosbeak.

OSU Geology Field Station [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76

geographic coordinates 44°34'00.8"N 120°06'27.3"W
([44.566885, -120.107583](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location, Habitat, and Birds: Located 2 miles east of Mitchell on Hwy 26. Look for the signs. Birds here include riparian species, juniper species, and canyon species.

Richmond Sixshooter Road [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 B-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 B-6

geographic coordinates 44°44'18.8"N 120°00'08.7"W
([44.738565, -120.002409](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: To reach this road travel west out of Mitchell for about a mile and turn north on Hwy 207. Take 207 for 17 miles to Sixshooter Rd.. Turn right and take this road for as long as you have time. You will probably have to return by the same route as a loop here is difficult.

Habitat and Birds: Richmond-Sixshooter Rd. has some interesting habitat along it, but it's an unfriendly sort of place because of all the obnoxious signage. A Western Flycatcher was found once in the moist canyon where it goes through the Iron Mt. area. Clark's Nutcracker, Red Crossbill, and Northern Goshawk have been seen here.

Fopiano Reservoir (AKA Frog Hollow)

[Return To Top](#)

DeLorme DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 B-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 C-6

geographic coordinates 44°34'47.4"N 119°56'56.9"W
([44.579843, -119.949148](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Fopiano Reservoir](#)

Location: Fopiano is 5 miles north of Hwy 26 on Parrish/Waterman Road (see above).

Habitat and Birds: Tundra Swan and Barrow's Goldeneye have been seen here. Many species of duck have been found here along with Double-crested Cormorant. Sora, Virginia Rail, Wilson's Phalarope, Loggerhead Shrike, and Yellow-headed Blackbirds are just a few of the possible species you might see.

Parish Creek & Waterman Roads [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 B-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 C-6
geographic coordinates 44°32'20.4"N 120°00'37.8"W
([44.538986, -120.010490](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location, Habitat, and Birds: Travel 8.4 miles east of Mitchell to Parrish Creek Road. "Parrish Creek Rd." is actually signed as "Waterman Rd." for the stretch between Hwy 26 and "downtown" Waterman (just an old hay shed that the years and weather have not been kind to). After that it turns into Parrish Creek Rd. from there to Spray, with different habitat (ponderosa pines etc. rather than the open country that you find from Mountain Creek to Waterman). The Waterman Rd. portion can be amazing for the numbers of Mountain Bluebirds and Yellow-rumped Warblers moving through the sagebrush during fall migration, in mid-September. Also there are a few good sparrow spots, and a Scrub Jay once appeared in the patch of junipers before Fopiano Reservoir.

West Branch Road [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 C-4
geographic coordinates 44°33'42.8"N 120°18'22.9"W
([44.561885, -120.306359](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: West Branch Road is 10 miles west of Mitchell on Hwy 26. This is about 37 miles from Prineville.

Habitat and Birds: This road starts in juniper, runs through farmland and sage country, and ends up in timber. These diverse habitats lead to a large birding list for this location. Species here include Rufous Hummingbird, Red-

naped Sapsucker, White-headed Woodpecker, Pacific-Slope Flycatcher, Western Bluebird, MacGillivray's Warbler, and Lincoln Sparrow.

Bandit Springs [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 C-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 C-4
geographic coordinates 44°29'11.7"N 120°23'49.4"W
([44.486579, -120.397068](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Bandit Springs is often the first site birded when people come to Wheeler County as it is close to the Crook County border and most people come through Prineville to access this county. From Prineville, drive 31.5 miles on Hwy 26 and look for the signs to Bandit Springs.

Habitat and Birds: This is a timbered area and you should expect timber species. Red Crossbills, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-headed Woodpecker, Western Wood Pewee, Mt. Chickadee, Pygmy Owl, Northern Goshawk, and Olive-sided Flycatcher can be found here.

Crystal Springs Aspen Groves [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 C-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 C-4
geographic coordinates 44°29'02.0"N 120°20'12.2"W

Aspen Groves - (44.457823, -120.352561)

Wildwood Campground - ([44.483889, -120.336721](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From Prineville, travel 28.6 miles east on Hwy 26. Turn right (south) on Rd 2630 and travel another 3.5 miles to road 2210 (birding along this stretch is productive). Turn left (NE) on 2210 and drive 3.1 miles to Wildwood Campground. Stop and bird the aspen groves as you come to them.

Habitat and Birds: This mixed forest is dominated by ponderosa pine and scattered aspen groves. Look and listen for Northern Pygmy-owl, Williamson's Sapsucker, nuthatches, chickadees, and creepers. Winter Wren can be found in the moist areas and Hermit Thrush nests here. Townsend's Warblers are up high and Fox Sparrows down low. Common Nighthawks and Vaux's Swift vie for winged food above the treetops while Ruby-crowned Kinglets and MacGillivray's Warblers work the lower brush. Wildwood Campground is a good birding site, though it's not as productive as it used to be since they cleared out the shrubs and young trees in the spring area where Mac Warblers and Lincoln's Sparrows used to nest. But there are still

lots of Townsend's Warblers singing and nesting high in the Doug firs there, and other birds typical of the moister forests on the north slope of the Ochocos. If you camp out there in summer, you can count on a good evening serenade by Hermit Thrushes.

Here is a partial list of species that have been recorded right in the campground:

Northern Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma*)
Williamson's Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*)
Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*)
Mountain Chickadee (*Poecile gambeli*)
Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*)
Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*)
Pacific Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)
Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*)
Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*)
Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*)
Townsend's Warbler (*Dendroica townsendi*)
Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*)
Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*)
Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*)

A lot of other birds can be found on walks or short drives. The horseshoe bend in the road about a half mile just below the campground overlooks an old burn where these species of woodpeckers have been found:

Lewis' Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*)
Williamson's Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*)
Red-naped Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus nuchalis*)
Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*)
White-headed Woodpecker (*Picoides albolarvatus*)
Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*)
Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*)

Mountain Bluebirds, Chipping Sparrows, Western Tanagers etc. can usually be found nearby in nesting season.

Bridge Creek Wilderness [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 C-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 D-5
geographic coordinates 44°27'44.6"N 120°13'29.8"W
([44.462388, -120.224935](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[Wilderness.net website](#)

Location: - From Prineville, go about 16 miles east on US 26, 8.5 miles north on Forest Road 22 (Ochoco Creek Road), 0.5 miles north on FR 150 (Howard Creek Road), then 7 miles north and east on FR 2630 to the Pisgah Springs/North Point trailhead. There is a primitive campground here.

Habitat and Birds: This is one of Oregon's smallest Wilderness areas at about 5400 Acres. There are few trails and birding can be a solitary experience here unless you choose to do it during the fall hunting season. The Bridge Creek fire of 2008 virtually destroyed the forest here so burned forest predominates. The regular forest species like nuthatches and chickadees are common but Pileated Woodpecker can sometimes be found here as can Northern Goshawk. Birding from the road can be very productive if you are not too adventurous. If you plan on exploring the wilderness, see the above Wilderness.net link for safety precautions and hints for a more enjoyable and safe outing.

Mt. Pisgah Lookout [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 C-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 76 D-5
geographic coordinates 44°27'25.1"N 120°14'10.5"W
([44.456977, -120.236241](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Mt. Pisgah is in SW Wheeler County. **The road to the top where the lookout is not for low clearance vehicles and can challenge even some high clearance SUVs.** Pisgah is not easy to reach. It is probably best accessed via northern Crook County. From Prineville, take Hwy 26 for 15 miles. Turn right at Ochoco Creek Road and follow the signs for Walton Lake and Ochoco Ranger Station. Continue for 8.5 miles and turn left on Badger Cr. Road (Also called Forest Road 22, this is just past Ochoco Ranger Station (again, follow signs to Walton Lake). Take Badger Creek for 4.4 miles (just past Walton Lake....the north end of Walton Lake marks the Wheeler/Crook county line). Stay right on Badger Creek and keep on Badger Creek for 7.5 miles to Fox Creek Road. Take Fox Creek north for 5.1 miles and look for the

sign to the Mt. Pisgah Lookout. The steep access road ([44.456893, -120.202353](#)) can be walked if your car is not brave enough to try the road.

Habitat and Birds: This is one of the few places in Oregon that offers the preferred habitat for Boreal Owl. Much of the Boreal Owl habitat burned in the 2008 Bridge Creek fire but there may still be enough habitat to support this species. This species has been located in the Bridge Creek Wilderness area in SW Wheeler County. Pisgah is a mostly bald hill that has a lookout tower on the top. Other species in this area include N. Goshawk, Gray Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, Red Crossbill, Cassin's Finch, and Townsend's Warbler. Check the wet spots for Lincoln Sparrow and even Killdeer have been spotted in the area. Pygmy and Saw-whet owls are in the area and this may be a good area to find Three-toed Woodpecker. Certainly Black-backed Woodpeckers are present. If you are looking to establish the forest bird portion of your Wheeler County list, you could do worse than choose this area.

Barnhouse Spring Camp Ground [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 C-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 D-6
geographic coordinates 44°28'04.5"N 119°56'26.6"W
([44.467911, -119.940731](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Barnhouse Campground](#)

Location: - 1) From Prineville travel on Hwy 380 for 55 miles to Paulina. Continue east on 380 3.5 miles to Beaver Creek Road. Turn north and travel for 8 miles to Forest Rd. 42. Take Forest Rd. 42 north for 8 miles to Forest Rd. 12. Take Forest Rd. 12 north 17 miles to campground. 2) Travel from Prineville to Mitchell on US 26 (48 miles). Stay on Hwy 26 and go 13 miles east of Mitchell. Turn right on Forest Rd. 12 and travel south 5 miles to the campground. 3) From John Day take US 26 west to Dayville. Twenty five miles west of Dayville, turn left on Forest Road 12. Go south on Forest Rd. 12 for 5 miles to the campground.

Habitat and Birds: This location gives a very good mountain birding experience. This is one of the best locations in the county to build a good mountain species list.

Forest Road 12 [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 80 B-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 C-6
geographic coordinates 44°31'16.4"N 119°55'41.7"W
([44.521225, -119.928250](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: This road is off of Hwy 26 13 east of Mitchell and 26 miles from Dayville (in fact, look for the road sign that says such right at the intersection, this will help you spot FR 12.

Habitat and Birds: This is a well maintained road that starts in dry desert sage and ends in lush forest. Look for sage species for the first mile and a half (Brewer's Sparrow, Lark Sparrow) then transition into the dry forest where Ash-throated Flycatchers and Dusky Flycatchers will greet you. Then continue as long as you like higher and higher into the pine forest.

Antone Road [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 C-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 D-7
geographic coordinates 44°31'31.4"N 119°53'36.6"W
([44.525403, -119.893505](#))

While this is probably the best winter birding site in the county, access to this road is always determined by the current owner. Please call 541 462-3145 to get current ownership and access information.

[View A Google Map](#)

Location, Habitat, and Birds: This area has recently been closed to the public reportedly due to a 99 year lease by Wheeler County to the new ranch owners. The road is now signed as private. Call 541 462-3145 for permission. If you receive permission to bird the area, take Antone Road for 1.5 miles and scan Fort Creek Reservoir. This is the site of many of the county's rare waterfowl sightings; including Bonaparte's Gull and Long-tailed Duck. Continue on for a couple of miles through Pine Hollow and Shingle Creek.

Mountain Creek Valley [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 B-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 C-6
geographic coordinates 44°31'11.5"N 119°56'54.2"W
([44.519864, -119.948379](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From the Junction of Hwys 19 and 26, travel 1.5 miles west on 26 to the Wheeler County line. From this point, travel west for 3.2 miles and Mountain Creek will appear on the side of the road. Hwy 26 follows Mountain Creek for 18 miles. Coming from the west, you will pick up Mountain Creek about 8 miles east of Mitchell.

Habitat and Birds: This section of Hwy 26 is a little hard to bird if the traffic is high but early mornings can produce good birds here. Look for Golden Eagle, ducks like Cinnamon Teal and merganser, Cooper's Hawk,

Prairie Falcon, pewees, Horned Larks, bluebirds, a wide variety of sparrows, and Lesser Goldfinch.

Spanish Peak [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 C-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 D-7
geographic coordinates 44°24'24.9"N 119°46'32.4"W
([44.406908](#), [-119.775676](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: On U.S. route 26, about 12 miles east of Mitchell or 16 miles west of the junction with SR 19, find forest route 12 (mileages estimated throughout). Follow route 12 for about 12 miles to a junction and turn left (east) on FR 1250. Follow this for about 3 miles to FR 38. Turn left and follow FR 38 about 3-1/2 miles to spur 200 on the left (north). This is on the boundary between sections 16 and 17. Take spur 200 to the summit, about 4 to 5 miles.

Habitat and Birds: A wide variety of birds can be found here from Rufous Hummingbird to White-headed Woodpecker and from Rock Wren to Western Tanager.

Black Canyon Wilderness [Return To Top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 81 C-6 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 77 D-7
geographic coordinates 44°20'09.3"N 119°45'01.5"W
([44.335921](#), [-119.750411](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[Wilderness.net Website](#)

Location: This location is best accessed from northern Crook County. Travel east out of Prineville on Hwy 380 for 55 miles to Paulina. From Paulina, go about 4 miles east on OR 380, 8 miles north on Forest Road 42, 1 mile east on FR 58, north about 10 miles on FR 5810, then 3 miles east on FR 5840. The latter roads may require high clearance or four wheel drive, depending on weather conditions.

Habitat and Birds: This is mixed conifer/ponderosa pine forest. Keep your eyes and ears open for Williamson's Sapsucker, Red-naped Sapsucker, and several other woodpecker species. All three nuthatches are here as are both bluebirds and other mountain passerines.